

## Noble Maiden Brave

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Summary: Kanna. From her birth, her life was always not her own.

Until she decided to look out across the walls of the north and make her own path, outside of her tribe's traditional views.

## Noble Maiden Brave

**\*\*Prompts:\*\***

**\*\*Easy: life\*\***

**\*\*Medium: chocolate\*\***

**\*\*Hard:\*\*** **\*\*"Enjoy your life today, because yesterday has gone and tomorrow may never come."\*\***

**\*\*Word count: 2,114\*\***

**\* \* \***

><p><strong>Noble Maiden Brave<strong>

The sound of a baby's cry, and a new life filled the room. A tiny child, shivering in the cold air, a little tuft of brown hair upon her head, her eyes shut tight as the healer held her up, inspecting her little body. Her cord was cut, and she cried all the harder, while she was placed gently in warm water to rinse away the blood. Her skin was rubbed furiously, bringing color to her delicate limbs and warmth to her body. And then, finally, the healer wrapped her in a soft blanket the color of blue, and handed her to the exhausted mother where she finally calmed, and blinked up at the person who held her.

"Hello," the girl cooed at her newborn infant. She was young, hardly eighteen, and the pain of childbirth already weighed heavy upon her. The healer's were performing a treatment on her, to ease her discomfort, but the new mother hardly cared about it all. She felt

like crying as she gazed down at the little thing in her arms, so small and delicate, but something that had come from her own body. It was surreal, to think that she had made something so precious.

"You can go in now," the mother heard one of the healers say to her husband outside. He stormed in, eyes going straight to the baby.

"Is it a boy or girl?" he asked, and the mother scowled. She disliked her husband. He was crude and sloppy and had hardly a care for anyone but herself. Their marriage had been an arranged one, like nearly all were in the Northern Water Tribe, but that did not ease the grudge she held against him.

"Girl," she answered with a sort of smug satisfaction. "And her name is Kanna." According to the legends of a time long ago, Kanna was the name of a proud warrior maiden, who felled enemies and dark spirits with her great water whips.

"Very well," her husband sighed, not knowing of the name's origin. He was clearly disappointed, however, possibly even angry, though it was hard to tell. "Hopefully you'll give me a son in due time," he added, and she scowled again, clutching her sweet babe closer. Then he left, not even seeming to notice the glares he was getting from the healers' for not at least holding his daughter. He was almost a decade older than her, but so often she felt like he was nothing more than a petulant child who didn't get his way.

The new mother shook her head and sighed as she was left with her child. The healer's would be back soon, to help her in whatever she needed while she recovered. For now, however, she was alone. Alone with her baby.

The girl looked down at the bundle in her arms, where the babe yawned and blinked up at her with those brilliant blue eyes of the Water Tribe. "Don't worry my precious little Kanna," the mother whispered. "I know that your father is perhaps not the most caring or gentle, but I won't ever let him hurt you. And maybe one day, our lives can be our own." She began to sing, a gentle Water Tribe lullaby her own mother used to rock her to sleep with.

\_Little baby, hear my voice  
><em>\_I'm beside you, O maiden fair  
><em>\_Our young Lady, grow and see  
><em>\_Your land, your own faithful land  
><em>\_Sun and moon, guide us  
><em>\_To the hour of our glory and honour  
><em>\_Little baby, our young Lady  
><em>\_Noble maiden fair\_

The mother held her child close, now fast asleep as she rocked herself into her own, peaceful slumber.

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><p>Kanna felt her tears run down her cheek, and she angrily wiped them away, afraid someone might see. How could he do this to her? How could he make her marry that awful Pakku? But of course her father didn't care that she didn't love him. <em>"He's from a noble family and a quite talented waterbender. You should be honored to marry him." <em>But Kanna read straight through his words. \_"His family has

wealth and power. One day, he will have\_\_ wealth and power. This is a much better match than I could have hoped for."\_

"Oh darling." Kanna turned to face her mother, who watched over her with sad eyes. She opened her arms and Kanna ran into them, clutching the older woman like she could somehow make this all go away. "I'm so sorry," her mother whispered. "I had hoped you would never have to go through what I did." It was an unspoken understanding between the two, the sexist ways of the Water Tribe, her mother's marriage to a man she had never loved, and now Kanna's turn, to a piggish boy who was so set in the traditional ways that she would be lucky to so much as voice her own opinion on something.

"I don't want to marry him!" Kanna sobbed, feeling the uncomfortable weight of her betrothal necklace tightened around her throat, as if it were choking her. This was her life! Shouldn't she have some say in it?

"I know honey," her mother sighed, stroking her hair. "I'm sorry. I truly am." She pulled back to look at her face, reaching out to wipe away her tears. "But maybe it won't be so bad," she tried vainly. "This Pakku boy doesn't seem half-bad."

"He's a cocky, insufferable, know-it-all who has no respect for me, or any other girl!" Kanna cried, pushing away from her mother to look out over the canals of the Water Tribe from their snowy bridge. Another tear rolled down her cheek and this time she let it fall, hitting her gloved hand from where it rested. Her mother came up behind her and put her arm around her shoulders, pulling her in. Kanna rested her head against her shoulder and breathed deeply. "I wish I was born a boy," she said softly.

"Don't!" her mother scolded. "Don't ever think down that route. It will only end in frustration and more pain."

"What should I do then?" Kanna asked desperately, and she truly was desperate. It wasn't just Pakku. It was the face that she was being forced to marry him, and she had no say whatsoever. It was her father. It were these stupid traditions and sexist ways!

Her mother was silent, considering her words for a long moment. Until finally she answered, "Live your life. Enjoy it today, because yesterday is gone, and..." She paused and turned to look down at her daughter. "And tomorrow may never come. So live your life, because I didn't and every day I wish that I...that I had done something." She shook her head and brushed a strand of Kanna's hair out of her eyes. "I love you, my darling girl." She smiled ruefully and added, "My noble maiden fair."

Kanna's vision blurred as the tears came for the third time. "I love you too mom." And she threw her arms around her, holding on tight as if she never wanted to let go. And that night, Kanna quietly gathered her things and plenty of provisions and slipped out of her humble little home she shared with her parents. There were no guards patrolling the streets, for there was no need. The only problem she had were at the walls, where sentries stood alert in case of any Fire Nation ships or other dangers were to come. But the walls were made to keep people out, not people in, and Kanna knew of a sewers that she was able to slip a canoe out of. It took her an hour to find a blind spot in the guards' watchful eyes, but once she found it, off

she went, silently paddling away into the night. This was \_her \_life, and she was going to live it the way she wanted to.

She paddled all morning, her limbs growing weary but her determination still strong, and when she turned back all she could see on the horizon were icebergs dotting the ocean. It was then that she felt the rustle on her neck, and realized she still wore her betrothal necklace. Kanna paused to take it off and glare down at it, until her face eventually softened and she gripped it in her hand. A token, she decided. To remind herself of home, even if there were few good memories left there. She stuffed it away in her pocket and continued to paddle, determined to go on until nightfall.

It took her a week to finally land on the shores of the Earth Kingdom, and the moment her canoe pulled to shore, she could do nothing but stare. Green. Green plants all around her, and beneath her boots- She kneeled and scooped up a handful of the grainy yellow stuff. What was it? Was this the earth that the benders here manipulated? She thought it'd be...harder. Less like warm, slippery snow and more like scratchy, stubborn ice. But perhaps there was much for her to learn. There was a whole world out there that she didn't understand. So much to see and do, and she would have never known any of it had she stayed at home! Maybe she'd taste of the rich, sugary sweets she heard about from the few merchants they got up in the north; chocolates and candies and jellies and all other things she didn't know, but would love to try. Or maybe she'd go see an earth rumble, whatever that was, or sip the bitter-sweet water these people seemed so fond of. And then, eventually, she'd make her way to the South Pole, where surely things must be better. And she'll be able to marry for love rather than political gain, and then maybe she can live her own life. So Kanna set out with a smile on her face, not caring that she had miles and miles of hard, dangerous roads to cross, with Fire Nation patrols and influence, and her own vulnerability more apparent than ever before. This was her life, and she was living it.

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><p>Kanna wondered, almost 80 years later, if she had done the right thing. She had abandoned her family, her entire tribe, and a boy who loved her more deeply than she ever realized, causing him to grow into an old, cranky man with stubbornness issues that could nearly rival her own. How ironic, that now as her time nears, it is his face that she will look for first in the other life.<p>

"Gran-Gran." With tired eyes, Kanna looked up to see the worried face of her granddaughter, so beautiful and strong and full of life. Katara smiled and revealed she held a squirming bundle, which gave soft gurgles as a tiny hand reached up for its mother's face. "This is your great-granddaughter," she said, holding the baby out for her to see. "Her name is Kya."

Kanna smiled and reached an old, wrinkled hand up to the baby's, where she grasped one finger tightly and brought it to her mouth. Katara giggled softly as her daughter began to gnaw on Kanna's finger, her toothless gums causing her drool to get everywhere.

"Beautiful," Kanna croaked. She turned her eyes to Katara and added, "Just like her mother." Her throat caught on the last word, and her

whole body was suddenly wracked with coughs. Baby Kya jumped at the noise, and Kanna's arm dropped back to her side. When she finally quieted, Katara had set the babe in her crib and was leaning over her with wide, worried eyes. "Do not fret, child," Kanna murmured, reaching out to grasp Katara's hand. She closed her eyes because the subtle light of the room seemed too bright all of a sudden. "I am old, and my time has come."

Kanna couldn't see, but Katara nodded as her eyes grew moist and blurred. She sat next to the bed and stroked her grandmother's hand as silent tears fell down her cheeks. Until she began to sing, very softly, but loud enough that even Kanna's old ears could catch her words.

\_Dearest mother, hear my voice  
>I'm beside you, O maiden fair<br>Spirit so brave, soon you'll see  
  
>Your land, your own faithful land<br>Sun and moon, guide you  
>To the hour of glory and honour<br>Dearest mother, love beside you  
  
>Noble maiden brave<em>

Kanna felt a tear drip onto her wrinkled hand and let a contented smile come upon her features. Yes, she decided. She had done the right thing. And now, as she faded, she was ready for the other life and the world beyond.

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><p><strong>The lullaby is, as you may have guessed, Noble Maiden Fair from Brave, except in English. You can look it up on YouTube if you want to hear how it sounds, but it will be in Gaelic. The second one I rewrote a bit, however, fitting more to Kanna and her death. Also, the "bitter-sweet water" is just tea. I don't think they drink it in the Water Tribe, so...yeah. Bitter-sweet water.<strong>

\*\*Anyway, I made Kanna's father a bit of a pig-headed a\*\*-hole, because there was probably something else in Kanna's life that caused her to run away to the South Pole. I mean, unless Pakku was the supreme jerk mayor from jerk-ville (and from what we do see of him and the fact that Kanna is willing to marry him later suggests that he can't be \_that \_bad), then it is unlikely she'd be willing to leave her entire family just because she doesn't want to marry someone. Unless said family isn't so great either (save her mother). So...yea, that's pretty much it. Hope you liked it!\*\*

End  
file.